

Message Text

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44

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3472

INFO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, HU

SUBJ: PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS - LANDSLIDE 1975

1. RESULTS OF HUNGARIAN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS ANNOUNCED
EVENING OF JUNE 16. WITH A TOURNOUT OF 97.6 PERCENT OF
REGISTERED VOTERS, AN AMAZING 99.6 PERCENT OF VOTE WENT TO
CANDIDATES PUT FORWARD BY PATRIOTIC PEOPLE'S FRONT (PPF). ALL
TOP PARTY AND GOVERNMENT LEADERS RECEIVED AT LEAST 98 PERCENT
OF VOTES CASE IN THEIR DISTRICTS WITH HSWP FIRST SECRETARY
KADAR RECEIVING A SMASHING 99.8 PERCENT MAJORITY. EQUAL NUMBERS
OF VOTES WERE REGISTERED FOR FORMER CC SECRETARIES, REZSO NYERS
AND GYORGY ACZEL. IN TWO PROVINCIAL DISTRICTS CANDIDATES RECEIVED
100 PERCENT OF VOTES CAST.

2. ONLY 34 OF 352 DISTRICTS HAD MORE THAN ONE CANDIDATE
IN CONTRAST TO 1971 WHEN 49 DISTRICTS HAD TWO OR MORE
CANDIDATES. TOP PPF LEADER TOLD EMBASSY POLOFF THAT THIS
YEAR'S REDUCTION IN NUMBER OF TWO-PARTY SEATS IS INDICATION
THAT "POPULACE MADE ITS TRUE FEELINGS KNOWN AT EARLIER
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STAGE OF PRE-ELECTORAL PROCESS". HE ALSO DENIED THAT

REDUCTION IN NUMBER OF TWO-PARTY CANDIDATES INDICATED A
REPUDIATION OF KADAR'S OFT-REPEATED PROMISE TO PROGRESSIVELY
INCREASE DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES.

3. ALTHOUGH ALL TOP GOVERNMENT AND PARTY LEADER WERE
RUNNING FOR PARLIAMENT, 45 PERCENT OF ALL CANDIDATES WERE NEW
FACES. FIFTY OF THEM WERE YOUNGER THAN 30 YEARS OLD AND
120 (OR 31 PERCENT) WERE WOMEN. IN ADDITION, PPF MADE AN EFFORT
TO MAINTAIN ITS INFORMAL QUOTA OF NON-PARTY MEMBERS,
CHURCHMEN, WORKERS, PEASANTS, ETC. IN PARLIAMENT.

4. IT IS CURIOUS THAT THERE ARE FEWER TWO-PARTY CANDIDATE
CONTESTS THIS YEAR THAN IN 1971 IN SPITE OF HUNGARIAN
OFFICIALS HAVING REPEATEDLY POINTED TO TWO-CANDIDATE
ELECTIONS AS A SIGN OF PROGRESS TOWARD DEMOCRACY AND
INCREASED CITIZEN PARTICIPATION. HUNGARYS MAY HAVE
CONSIDERED TIME NOT RIPE TO BE OUT OF STEP WITH THEIR
EASTERN NEIGHBORS. IN ANY CASE, THIS STEP BACK CAN ONLY
INCREASE FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC CYNICISM RE ELECTORAL
PROCESS AND ROLE OF PARLIAMENT.

5. ONE RELIABLE HUNGARIAN SOURCE REPORTED TO EMBASSY THAT
DUE TO LACK OF POLLING BOOTH HE HAD TO CAST BALLOT UNDER
WATCHFUL EYE OF SIX PPF OBSERVERS. ALTHOUGH THIS WAS
CLEARLY EXCEPTIONAL CASE, IT DOES ILLUSTRATE DEVOTION TO
DEMOCRATIC NORMS ON PART OF SOME PPF FUNCTIONARIES.
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